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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Urges Congress to Pass DAIRY PRIDE Act

Madison, Wis. [January 29, 2020] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is calling on Congress to pass the DAIRY PRIDE Act soon and make providing clarity to consumers in the dairy case a priority.

“Today’s consumers are inundated with ads and sales pitches, especially when it comes to purchasing products that support a healthy lifestyle and provide quality nutrition. Imitators of real dairy products are no exception to portraying themselves in this light, although they pale in comparison to the nutrition package and overall taste profile that real dairy provides,” says John Rettler, dairy farmer from Neosho, Wis. and president of FarmFirst.

Echoing the same concerns that NMPF’s Executive Vice President Tom Balmer presented today to the House Energy & Commerce’s Committee subcommittee on Health, FarmFirst asks for Congress to put consumers as their priority.

“Consumers are being clearly misguided when a product uses the word ‘milk’ on its packaging and completely lacks the properties of milk’s nutrition, taste profile, and overall simplicity of a naturally-produced product. The ingredient list couldn’t be simpler: milk. No stabilizers, no emulsifiers, no blending, no powders, no whiteners, and no sweeteners. Just real milk,” adds Rettler.

While federal guidelines make it clear that a product labeled with ‘milk’ must come from a cow or certain other lactating animals, the FDA has failed to enact these regulations. The DAIRY PRIDE Act would designate foods that make an inaccurate claim about milk contents as “misbranded” and subject to enforcement of labeling rules. It would require FDA to issue guidance for nationwide enforcement of mislabeled imitation dairy products within 90 days of its passage and require FDA to report to Congress two years after enactment to hold the agency accountable in its enforcement. The legislation would force FDA to act against plant-based imitators of milk, cheese, butter and other products that brazenly flout FDA rules.

“The DAIRY PRIDE Act would allow for much needed clarity in the dairy case and remind consumers that often substitutes just can’t compare. This issue has gone on far too long, and its truly American consumers that continue to be misguided. FarmFirst urges Congress to pass this legislation as soon as possible and require the FDA to enact a regulation they’ve ignored,” says Jeff Lyon, general manager of FarmFirst. “We give special thanks to Senator Baldwin (D-WI) for taking the leadership on this important issue along with the other congressional leaders taking the health of today’s consumers seriously.”

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative, established in 2013 and based in Madison, Wis., represents farmers in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana by providing legislative and regulatory advocacy,

dairy marketing services, disaster protection, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion. FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is a merger of three long-time prominent Wisconsin-based cooperatives. Learn more about FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative by visiting: www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com.

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